1. Title
Stability of economic preferences in times of crisis

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3. Abstract
Economic preferences such as risk, time, and social preferences play an important role for a wide range of individual behavior and outcomes as well as aggregated economic variables (e.g. GDP growth, volume of trade between countries). While neoclassical economics assumes perfect stability of economic preferences at the individual level over time, this assumption is ultimately an empirical question. However, previous empirical studies analyzing the general temporal stability of economic preferences as well as their changes after exogenous shocks (e.g. economic crises, natural catastrophes, violent conflicts) or due to temporary variations in self-control, emotions, or stress provide ambiguous evidence and mainly focus on risk preferences. Against this background, this project examines the stability of economic preferences in the COVID-19 crisis, which is certainly the biggest societal, health, and economic global crisis since World War II. Based on data from two representative large-scale web surveys among German citizens, the project empirically compares time preferences, altruism, risk preferences, trust, positive reciprocity, and negative reciprocity before and during the crisis. In addition to the consideration of intertemporal correlations for each economic preference, we also analyze the stability of the correlations between all six economic preferences over time. Furthermore, a sub-sample of respondents is surveyed in both time periods, which enables us to apply panel econometric approaches. The corresponding fixed effects estimations that also include individual crisis concerns as well as measures for individual emotions such as fear allow us to shed more light on the causal effects of the COVID-19 crisis on economic preferences. Finally, we examine whether temporal (in)stabilities of economic preferences are different among population groups, for example, with respect to age, gender, or income. Based on the results of the empirical analysis, we will derive implications for economic theory, future econometric analyses, and policy measures.

4. Data description
Our empirical analysis is based on data from two surveys among citizens in Germany. The first data set stems from a large-scale web survey among 3705 individuals, which was carried out in June and July 2016 in cooperation with the German market research company Psyma. The collection of the second data set has started at Easter 2020 and thus during the time of still strongly increasing numbers of deaths through the coronavirus and especially the strongest restrictions of daily life in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. This second web survey among about 1500 individuals has been conducted in cooperation with Psyma again. In order to build a panel data set, all respondents from the first survey have been asked to participate again in the second survey. We expect to collect panel data for between 500 and 1000 respondents. In order to receive a sample size of about 1500 individuals, additional respondents from the Psyma panel are selectively recruited so that the final sample is representative in terms of age, gender, place of residence, and education. The sub-group of respondents who participate in both
surveys allows the application of panel econometric approaches to control for unobserved heterogeneity.

5. JEL codes for the project
D01, D1, D91

6. Keywords
COVID-19 crisis, economic preferences, stability, panel data